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FLOOR DEBATE

May 19, 2003

LB 43, 73

SENATOR CUDABACK: LB 43 advances. Mr. Clerk, next agenda item.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next bill, LB 73, a bill by Senator Cunningham. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 9 of this year, at that time referred to Health and Human Services. The bill was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM0304, Legislative Journal page 483.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Cunningham, to open on advancement of LB 73.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. LB 73 is the Outpatient Surgical Procedures Data Act. Two years ago I introduced LB 399, which was a very similar bill that did get out of committee. We still had some work to do. We had some controversy with the bill and in that time period we've been working on that bill. And I'd like to thank Senator Byars and Senator Jensen for the work they've spent, helping me with this bill. The other day, I don't remember which senator it was, but some senator got up and was singing the praises of Jeff Santema, the legal counsel for the Health and Human Services Committee, and until you've worked with Jeff you probably don't realize how important he is. So, Jeff, I'd like to tell you thank you. And he's sitting over there, for those of you who don't know Jeff. So thank you, Jeff. But this bill requires reporting of all outpatient surgeries by hospitals and surgery centers. Now at this point, I'm not going to go into detail of what this reporting does because the committee amendments become the bill, and Senator Jensen is going to go into that when he introduces the committee amendments, but this bill, in my opinion, is very important for public health. We'll be able to tell, from this bill, if we have a certain type of cancer, for instance, that's coming from one area of the state in large numbers. It will be good for public health planning, for hospitals in small rural areas to be able to see how many different types of services are being done that are leaving their area, and they may be able to plan for those, put a clinic on in their hospital. So I think it's important for the vitality of small rural hospitals. And with that, I'm going to